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Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 21, 2010

Offices of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)

DuPage County Conference Room

Suite 800, 233 S. Wacker Drive, Willis Tower, Chicago, Illinois

Members Present:

Mark Avery (chair), Ed Paesel (co-chair), Robert Cole, Roger Dahlstrom, Kristi DeLaurentiis, Jim LaBelle, Steve Lazzara (for Curt Paddock), Heather Tabbert, Nathaniel Werner, Norm West

Members Absent:

Judy Beck, Jerry Conrad, Lisa DiChiera, Karie Friling, David Galowich, Robert Palmer, Dennis Sandquist, Heather Smith, Karen Stonehouse, Nancy Williamson,

Staff Present:

Ty Warner (committee liaison), Ryan Ames, Bob Dean, Stephen Ostrander, Jesse Elam, Holly Ostdick

Others Present:

Robert Munson (CMAP Citizen Advisory Committee), Tam Kutzmark (DuPage Mayors & Managers Conference), Ryan Richter (Metra), Tom Chefalo (Lake County), Mike Walczak (Northwest Municipal Conference)

1.0 Call to Order

Chairman Mark Avery called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

Ty Warner announced that Kai Tarum is no longer with Kane County and will no longer be serving on the committee, but she asked to pass on her thanks and appreciation for the work of the committee an expressed that she will miss the rich and informed discussions of this group., Ty also announced he is leaving CMAP to take a new position in Kansas, and echoed Kai's sentiments in expressing his appreciation for the time and efforts of the Committee members and their contributions to the work of regional planning. Ty indicated Stephen Ostrander will be taking his place as staff liaison to the Land Use Committee.

3.0 Approval of Meeting Notes

Roger Dahlstrom moved, Norm West seconded to approve the minutes of March 17, 2010. All in favor, the motion carried.

4.0 Legislative Update

Ty Warner spoke on behalf of Lisa DiChiera from Landmarks Illinois about Senate bill 2559 that supports the passing of an Illinois tax credit for rehabilitating historic buildings.

Mark Avery commented that CMAP found a solution to receiving money they would have received from the Regional Comprehensive Planning Fund. Bob Dean confirmed that is the case as IDOT is giving a large part of that money to CMAP.

5.0 GO TO 2040: Bob Dean, CMAP

5.1 Major Capital Projects: Bob Dean, CMAP

Bob Dean presented the status on major capital projects being considered a part of the (1) fiscally constrained list and, (2) on the fiscally unconstrained list. For clarification, major capital projects do not include most of the freight projects as well as arterial and bus projects. CMAP projects that \$385 billion will be needed in transportation revenue by 2040. To break that down: \$332.7 billion is needed for maintaining the system, \$41.8 billion is needed for strategic improvements, and \$10.5 billion is needed for major capital expansions. The major capital projects were evaluated based on, (1) consistency meeting the objectives of the preferred regional scenario, (2) individual project evaluation outcomes, and (3) project status or stage of development. Metra projects on the constrained list are UP-N, UP-NW, UP-W, Southwest Service (a CREATE initiative), and Rock Island. CTA and CDOT projects are the Red Line north improvements and south extension, and the West Loop Transportation Center. Highway projects that add lanes are I-80 (US30 to US45), I-90 and some smaller projects; I-94 and I-88. The I-294/I-57 interchange is also on the list. Managed lanes projects on the fiscally constrained list are, I-90, I-290, and I-55. Highway projects that feature extensions and improvements include western access to O-Hare and the Central Lake County Corridor (IL 53 & IL 120).

Tom Chefalo commented that people in Lake County are treating the Central Lake County Corridor as two separate projects (one for IL 53, and one for IL 120).

Jim LaBelle added that there was a stalemate over this issue for years and so they put both projects together. The projects could be treated separately, but they really both need to be completed.

Bob Dean acknowledged the concerns over the IL 53 project and said that CMAP recommends aggressive context sensitive solutions, preservation of open space, and the consideration of lower-speed street designs.

Tom Chefalo supported the recommendation but cautioned that implementation of the project may not take account of CMAP's recommendations.

Jim LaBelle said there several major concerns with the project. One is how the increased traffic will impact the local road networks and the other is how the development will impact the communities that it will go through.

Norm West wanted a point of clarification on the issue of CMAP's authority in this kind of instance. Bob replied by saying that while CMAP will work closely with IDOT (or whoever is the project manager), it has been assumed that CMAP simply offers recommendations and that they will be taken into account.

Mark Avery supported Bob's connotation, saying CMAP is operating under the assumption that there will be buy-in right? Bob said that is basically right and that he is not sure what actions could be taken if they disregarded the recommendations.

Robert Cole suggested that other people involved in these kinds of projects may not understand the benefits that have been identified in the preferred regional scenario. There should be more push of this kind of evidence because if these benefits are not clearly portrayed, it will be an uphill battle to get them approved.

Regarding impact projections, Bob Dean went on to summarize the project evaluation results in aggregate. As a whole, the projects identified have beneficial economic development outcomes. Largely because of a bigger regional population, there are some air quality impacts that are moving negatively because of increased travel.

Jim LaBelle asked if Bob knew what percentage of the negative air quality impacts were a result of cars and trucks. Bob said that only moving vehicle (cars and trucks) were factored into this particular air quality calculation.

Robert Cole asked if new federal air quality standards were included. Bob said that new requirements from the EPA were used and that the projections show the region will easily meet those requirements.

Steve Lazzara spoke about how Will County strongly seeks support from CMAP on the Illiana project. It is a significant multi-state project that has real freight implications.

Bob Dean used that comment to transition into the section about the projects on the fiscally unconstrained list. These projects have more variation regarding the kind and stages of development of the projects. The Illiana Corridor is one where CMAP recommends a phase 1 feasibility study for the western portion of the corridor and would like to see where all of the private financing will come from. Another project on this list that CMAP supports but has several issues is the Southeast Service Metra project in Cook County. The concern is with the financing and CMAP hopes some innovative financing can be worked out.

Ed Paesel said the Southeast Service project should be considered a separate project and that he was not sure what was pulling the Metra Electric extension ahead of that project.

Bob said that for transit projects, you have to be on the fiscally constrained list before you can get a phase 1 engineering study developed. The Southeast Service can continue going further on the alternatives analysis, but it will need to be on the fiscally constrained list to go any further.

Ed responded by saying that the Southeast Service is as far along, if not more so, in terms of the alternatives analysis than the Red Line extension and asked if CMAP was more comfortable with the financing CTA laid out for that project. Bob said the Red Line extension seems like a solid project and while CMAP supports the Southeast Service, several issues need to be resolved first.

Similar to the last couple projects, Bob explained how the Star Line project has some real financing concerns.

Tam Kutzmark asked Bob to explain the language, "recommended for accelerated project development." Bob said these are projects that look good but really need further study before they can move on.

Jim LaBelle asked if service capacity upgrades (like paying for new transit cars, or frequency of service) are included into the calculations. Bob confirmed that they are included.

Heather wanted clarification whether CMAP was referring to a specific project within the South Lakefront Corridor. Heather also said CDOT is developing a study later this summer in that corridor. Bob said there are a couple of projects within the corridor that CMAP has considered.

Robert Cole commented that CMAP ought to distinguish between what kind of BRT system is being proposed. An express bus is quite different than a BRT with dedicated lanes. Bob agreed.

Kristi DeLaurentiis had a couple comments about revenue assumptions regarding toll portions of some of the projects. Kristi asked why the revenue was lower from a couple projects like I-90. Bob said I-90 is a good example because CMAP does not recommend a toll for the whole stretch and therefore, there will be less revenue associated with that project.

Kristi mentioned that IDOT may be proposing additional toll sections on several add lane projects. Bob said these ideas are currently in an early stage of consideration and development, but CMAP will be paying close attention.

Jim LaBelle asked what the reason would be to not have managed lanes as part of an add lane project. Bob said the length and scale of the project is one reason. If projects are relatively small or in advanced stages of design, then it is hard to include managed lanes.

Bob Dean said CMAP is still looking for comments from the regular stakeholders on the plan.

Robert Munson wanted to know how the regional planning process has improved and changed over time, especially considering that the number of projects will likely continue to grow. Should a weighted average rating system be employed by CMAP for such purposes? Bob said CMAP does not use a single weighted average and that he does not know of any other MPO that does. Individual projects can vary too much for the standardization to work, though if a good system was developed, CMAP would be very interested.

Robert Cole suggested CMAP developing something like the Metro-Quest software used last summer to show the relationships and impacts that particular major capital projects could have on the region.

5.2 Recommendations on Resource Conservation: Hala Ahmed, CMAP This agenda item was postponed until next month's meeting.

5.3 Land Use & Housing Key Recommendation Draft Text: Bob Dean, CMAP

This portion of the plan is all about livability. The draft given for the meeting is a good representation of what will be in the final plan, though the language will be refined and made more accessible to the general public. The plan does not suggest getting directly involved with local land use decisions. CMAP respects the authority of local municipalities and Counties. One of the most significant recommendations is one the need for local ordinances to be updated with current plans and policy. The link between local planning and ordinances will be an area of focus moving forward. Funding for local planning and ordinance updates is needed. Atlanta's Livable Communities Initiative (LCI) and San Francisco's Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) are good models for what CMAP would look toward. CMAP recommends aligning funding streams from within CMAP itself, RTA and IDOT to fund planning and ordinance updates. More specifically, these funding streams would consist of Unified Work Program (UWP) funds administered by CMAP, RTA's Community Planning Program funds, and IDOT's Statewide Planning and Research funds. Additionally, CMAP recommends a portion of the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds be used to create a separate funding source for infrastructure investments. The federal Sustainable Communities Initiative is also a primary recommendation for providing funding down the road.

Heather Tabbert asked if the STP money would be taken from the region's portion of the state funding stream. Bob said that while the state divides STP in all different way on a project level, it is correct that the portion coming to our region would be the money from which a portion would be directed for these purposes.

Mark Avery asked what kind of communication and lobbying there needed to be directed toward federal officials.

Norm West said we need to communicate how much we support the new initiative and asked if CMAP should have a federal lobbyist.

Ed Paesel said there are talks (MPC and other folks) about getting in an application to get funds from the initiative and that CMAP does not need a lobbyist for this issue.

Kristi DeLaurentiis added that a lot of advocacy is already happening. Kristi also mentioned that a roundtable will be held on April 27th at noon about the San Francisco example.

Ed Paesel mentioned that DCEO has funded zoning and planning on a local level, but that it is just not well known that they do that. CMAP should declare a larger role for DCEO on the issue of funding local planning.

Heather Tabbert said that RTA is now acting on helping communities update ordinances. Antioch's new form-based code is a good example of how RTA is working on the issue. Heather also mentioned that it is the capital funds that need to be emphasized (for infrastructure investments).

Tam Kutzmark commented that transportation is really taking the lead on this matter and while that is great, perhaps CMAP needs to widen the scope and look to other funding streams.

Tom Chefalo agreed and added that there are many other kinds of planning efforts and deal with land use and yet they are not coordinated with each other or have an integrated pool of funds.

Bob Dean carried on with recommendations from the draft. Key technical assistance recommendations include creating model ordinances and codes that municipalities could tailor and adopt. Moreover, research on form-based coding is prioritized so that CMAP could help communities implement these kinds of alternative land use regulatory systems. Planning commissioner workshops are also a technical assistance priority. Intergovernmental collaboration is also high on the priority list.

Ed Paesel recommended that investment be made for a circuit-rider planner to directly assist municipalities with their planning activities because many do not have the planning expertise or fiscal resources to hire consultants to the work. Bob agreed that was a great idea, but having the funding is tough for CMAP. It is an option that will be explored further. Ed said that should be expressed in the plan.

Mark Avery also agreed with the idea, because many communities that need it the most do not have the capacity.

Heather Tabbert noted that RTA recently brought on a staff member to solely work on the implementation side of technical assistance for their community planning programs. This kind of effort is intended to have long-term implications on the implementation side of the plan. Bob said that a joint effort on this issue should be explored.

Kristi DeLaurentiis added to the discussion by suggesting a joint effort with some other organizations may be needed to better include some of the other elements like affordable housing and natural resources.

Bob referred to the draft plan concerning how CMAP will continue to emphasize intergovernmental collaboration and act as a facilitator and coordinator. Finally, emphasizing the link between transit, land use, and housing is a top priority in the plan as well as on the radar for efforts CMAP will engage in after the plan is released. On the policy side of this link, CMAP feels state and federal funding should be targeted to places that have better access to transit or are actively engaged in transit planning efforts.

Tam Kutzmark expressed concern about the language regarding how funding should only be targeted to municipalities that are or were recently actively engaged in planning that links transit and land use. Tam informed that many municipalities will wait to see if there is investment, and then will do the necessary planning to accommodate the transit. Funding may need to be promised first, before communities can justify their own money and energy to engage in undertaking the changes necessary. Tam recommended the language be changed to reflect these concerns. Bob acknowledged there is a chicken-and-egg kind of dilemma with the issue, but CMAP feels the planning stage is most appropriate place to get buy-in for making necessary changes for transit, as well as look to attain commitments for funding. That is partially why CMAP is emphasizing the importance of actively engaging in appropriate planning efforts.

Steve Lazzara expressed his concern about the affordable housing aspect to transit-oriented development (TOD) planning and asked if CMAP would strengthen the language to more explicitly encourage affordable housing. Steve said that CMAP and other regional entities need to carry that banner first before other folks may be willing to come around on the issue. Bob agreed that affordable housing is an important issue, especially given that effective TOD will most likely raise property values and the natural market supports market-rate housing.

Mark Avery agreed with Steve's concern, and said the people need to recognize that TOD does not need to result in high-end development.

Robert Cole recommended CMAP reference a mixed-income TOD example or two. Kristi DeLaurentiis suggested water and stormwater management be included somewhere in the land use chapter of the plan. Bob said that those issues are being heavily emphasized elsewhere. The plan will probably have a good number of links, but CMAP is looking to limit the repetition.

Tom Chefalo said there is a need for educating the general public on why land use planning is of real value. Many people do not even know what planning really is and thus do not fight for worthwhile causes on these issues. Maybe it is not the role of CMAP to do this, but there needs to be more outreach to the people.

Steve Lazzara agreed on finding better ways to reach the general public.

Robert Cole felt outreach and civic participation was worth highlighting in the plan. Bob felt the issue is definitely an important one, but that he would lean toward CMAP not being the appropriate organization to lead that endeavor.

Mark Avery agreed with Bob and said that much of the outreach needs to come from the local level like elected officials.

Nathaniel Werner agreed that outreach needs to be done by local people, but that there are also regional issues that transcend any given local entity and need regional representation.

Norm West suggested local television channels could be an effective medium for getting this message out, via appearances by Randy Blankenhorn (for example).

6.0 Next Meeting:

May 19, 2010

7.0 Other Business

Heather Tabbert announced the RTA has an upcoming open house event on April 28th for RTA funding programs. These include the Community and Subregional Planning Programs, Job Access/Reverse Commute (JARC)/ New Freedom (NF) Programs and the Innovation, Coordination and Enhancement (ICE) Program. Applications are due on June 10th, 2010.

8.0 Public Comment

None

9.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10am

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Ostrander

Staff Liaison to the Land Use Committee

Notes compiled with the help of Ryan Ames